



PONY EXPRESS STATION—This marker marks the site of the Great Salt Lake City station of the pony express. It is an official marker of the Utah Pioneer Trails and Landmarks Assn. It stands on Main Street south of First South.

First Pony Express in Utah Built Near Coalville

(Submitted by Colleen Dickson)

The first pony express station in Utah was built about five miles north of Coalville at the mouth of Echo Canyon. Construction of these stations began almost ten years before the express was organized. Work on the Echo Canyon station, known as the Weber Stage and Pony Express Station, began in 1835 and the service began in 1860.

The route was from St. Joseph, Mo., to Sacramento, Calif., with stations conveniently spaced between. Horses were changed at these stations, and the riders sometimes had to pass the ruins of smoldering stations because Indians had been there first.

These stations were not exactly built for comfort, though for their time they had a number of luxuries such as tallow candles, oiled paper windows and

solid dirt roofs. Of course when it rained the roof would be washed away in spots, but the stations served a good purpose.

Besides a stopping place for the express riders, a shelter for the hostlers and a supply depot, they often served as dance halls, churches, schools and hospitals. The one in Echo Canyon even served as a service station for the modern automobile in later years.

The first pony express rider left Sacramento, April 3, 1860, and the first rider from St. Joseph left on the same day. The rider from the west arrived in Salt Lake City at 11:45 p.m. April 7, having traveled the last 75 miles in five hours and 15 minutes. From St. Joseph the rider arrived at 6:25 p.m. April 9.

